



Appropriation Terms

Account

- ❖ A financial reporting unit for budgeting purposes. Colloquially, Appropriations staff will refer to a program office or agency as an account in their portfolio.
 - i.e.: “We have a meeting with the Appropriations staffer who handles the NeighborWorks account for the Senate Majority.”

Appropriations Act

- ❖ A statute (bill passed into law) under the jurisdiction of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations providing the legal authority for the Treasury to make payments to federal agencies and other related agencies for specified purposes.

Appropriations Committee

- ❖ The Congressional Committee responsible for allocating funding for all federal agencies, divided into 12 subcommittees with differing jurisdictions. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine spending levels based on the budget resolution developed by the House and Senate Budget Committees, while also considering the President’s proposed budget. Thus, the common expression regarding the budget process: “the President proposes, and Congress disposes.”
 - NeighborWorks America grants are under jurisdiction of the “THUD” (Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies) Subcommittee.

Budget Authority

- ❖ Authority provided by federal law that allows government funds to be allocated to federal agencies and other related agencies. Budget authority is often classified by its duration (1-year, multiple year, or no-year).

Budget Committee

❖ The Congressional Committee responsible for developing a resolution on the budget to serve as the framework on taxes and spending.

Congressional Budget Justification

❖ Documents federal agencies submit to the Appropriation Committees to justify the President's Budget Request. Also called a "Congressional Justification" or "CJ".

Continuing Resolution

❖ An Act that allows budget authority for the current fiscal year to continue when the subsequent fiscal year's budget has not been completed in time. Also referred to as a "CR," "continuing appropriation," or "stopgap spending bill."

Dear Colleague

❖ A public-facing letter sent by Members of Congress with multiple co-signatories to Congressional or Committee leadership, in order to show support or opposition for a particular policy or program.

- A Dear Colleague is used when multiple Members sign on to the same funding request and is sent to the Appropriations Committee. Also called "Group request."

Discretionary Spending

❖ Federal funding for programs set by Appropriation Acts, not including funding for mandatory programs.

- NeighborWorks America funding is included in the discretionary spending category.

Earmark

❖ The colloquial term for what is formally called “Community Project Funding (CPF)” in the House and “Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS)” in the Senate. Earmarks allow Members of Congress to request that federal funds be set aside for specific projects in their states or districts.

Expenditure

❖ The spending of money.

Fiscal Year

❖ A yearly accounting period, regardless of its relationship to the calendar year. The federal government fiscal year (FY) runs from October 1st to September 30th.

Grant

❖ A federal financial assistance award made for a specified purpose.

➤ **Block Grants** are given to general governmental units according to a statutory formula (i.e.: CDBG or HOME).

➤ **Competitive Grants** are awarded to entities determined through an application process. Not all applicants are awarded funding in a competitive grant process. (i.e.: NeighborWorks America’s Housing Stability Counseling Program or HUD’s Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program).

- The parameters outlined by a federal agency for a grant application are sometimes referred to as a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Individual Appropriations Request

❖ Requests Members submit to the Appropriations Committees on behalf of their constituents to request the inclusion of certain funds or language in the final Appropriations bill.

Line Item

❖ Refers to an individual account or part of an account for which a specific funding amount is available.

Mandatory Spending

❖ Federal spending that is not subject to the annual appropriations process. Examples of mandatory spending programs are Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, and unemployment compensation.

Mark-Up

❖ Hearings where Congressional committees work on the content of bills and consider amendments submitted by committee members.

Omnibus Appropriations

❖ Legislation that packages together multiple appropriations bills into a single, larger legislative package passed with each chamber only having to vote once for passage.

President's Budget

❖ The President's proposed funding levels for federal programs during a single fiscal year, submitted to Congress. Also referred to as the "President's Budget Request", "Budget Request", or "PBR".

Spending Caps

❖ Limits on discretionary spending.

- The debt-limit deal Congress enacted in 2023, entitled "the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA)," set statutory caps on defense and non-defense appropriations for fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

Subcommittee Allocation/ 302(b) Allocation

❖ The distribution of spending authority (federal funds) by the Appropriations Committee to their relevant Appropriations subcommittees. (i.e: The total level of spending allocated to the THUD appropriations bill is that subcommittee's 302(b) allocation.)